

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 114289

17

ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 OMB-01 IO-10 SAM-01 SAJ-01 /085 R

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PM/ISO:MDWORKEN

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DOD/ISA:MCONNORS

EUR/NE:SWORREL

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R 152353Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

S E C R E T STATE 114289

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AS, NZ, MARR

SUBJECT: FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS

REF: WELLINGTON 1262

CINCPAC FOR POLAD ALSO

1. TIZARD'S STATEMENT ON NEW ZEALAND TROOPS IN SINGAPORE
AS REPORTED IN REFTEL RAISES ANEW QUESTION OF POSITION WE
SHOULD TAKE WITH GOA AND GONZ ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 114289

FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS (FPDA). WE RECOGNIZE THAT

US IS NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED AND THAT OUR LEVERAGE IS LIMITED, BUT FPDA IS ONE FACTOR IN SECURITY EQUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA IN WAKE OF COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN CAMBODIA AND VIET-NAM.

2. AS ADDRESSEES ARE WELL AWARE, THERE HAS BEEN REDUCTION IN COMMITMENT OF AUSTRALIAN FORCES TO SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA SINCE LABOR GOVERNMENTS WERE ELECTED IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND LATE 1972, AND SOME DISCUSSION OF FURTHER REDUCTIONS BY GOA AND GONZ IN FUTURE. HOWEVER, WE HAD BEEN UNDER IMPRESSION THAT SITUATION HAD STABILIZED FOR TIME BEING. ON DECEMBER 4, 1974, NEW ZEALAND PRIME MINISTER ROWLING REPORTEDLY REAFFIRMED NEW ZEALAND'S INTENTION TO

MAINTAIN ITS MILITARY FORCE IN SINGAPORE, AND REGRETTED BRITISH DECISION TO WITHDRAW FORCES FROM THE AREA. AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE MINISTER BARNARD REPORTEDLY SAID ON DECEMBER 19, 1974, THAT THE AUSTRALIAN NAVY WOULD MAINTAIN ITS PRESENCE IN SINGAPORE DESPITE BRITAIN'S DECISION TO WITHDRAW. MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER TUN ABDUL RAZAK TOLD PRESS ON DECEMBER 30 THAT AUSTRALIAN MIRAGES WOULD STAY AT BUTTERWORTH, AND THAT MALAYSIA STILL NEEDED AUSTRALIAN ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE (KUALA LUMPUR 6165). SINGAPORE PM LEE KUAN YEW TOLD NEW ZEALAND AUDIENCE APRIL 7 THAT NEW ZEALAND FORCES WERE WELCOME TO STAY IN SINGAPORE AS LONG AS THEY WISHED TO DO SO (WELLINGTON 918). KUALA LUMPUR 2340, REPORTING ON VISIT OF NEW ZEALAND DEFENSE MINISTER FRASER TO MALAYSIA, NOTED THAT EXPECTATION OF GOM AND GONZ IS THAT NEW ZEALAND GROUND AND AUSTRALIAN AIR UNITS WILL BE WITHDRAWN FROM SINGAPORE AND MALAYSIA RESPECTIVELY IN NEXT FEW YEARS, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO FIRM TIMETABLE.

3. AT ANZUS COUNCIL MEETING HERE APRIL 24-25, AUSTRALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILLESEE SAID AUSTRALIA THOUGHT WE SHOULD LET FPDA AND SEATO STAY AS THEY ARE. NEW ZEALAND LABOR MINISTER FAULKNER SAID GONZ POSITION WAS ABOUT THE SAME AS THAT OF THE GOA, BUT ADDED THAT GONZ WAS THINKING OF BRINGING ITS FORCES HOME IN ABOUT TWO YEARS. FAULKNER SAID THAT LEE KUAN YEW WOULD BE HAPPY FOR THE NEW ZEALAND FORCES TO GO, BUT THAT LEE SAID THAT NEW ZEALAND

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 114289

CAN STAY IF IT WANTS TO. FAULKNER GAVE NO INDICATION THAT ANY ANNOUNCEMENT WAS IMMINENT.

4. WHILE WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN ADEQUATE NOTICE THAT NEW ZEALAND AND PERHAPS AUSTRALIA MAY EVENTUALLY WITHDRAW FORCES FROM AREA, TIMING OF TIZARD ANNOUNCEMENT WAS UNFORTUNATE, COMING SO SOON AFTER COMMUNIST VICTORIES IN CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIET-NAM. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT IT COULD SET STAGE

FOR AUSTRALIAN DECISION TO WITHDRAW, AND FOR MORE RAPID PULLOUT BY BOTH COUNTRIES THAN HAD BEEN PLANNED.

5. DEPARTMENT THEREFORE REQUESTS THAT EMBASSIES CANBERRA AND WELLINGTON APPROACH GOA AND GONZ TO ASCERTAIN THEIR PLANS ON THE FUTURE DEPLOYMENT OF THEIR FORCES IN CONNECTION WITH FPDA. IN MAKING THIS APPROACH, EMBASSIES SHOULD EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO A CLIMATE OF CONFIDENCE AMONG NON-COMMUNIST STATES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA. WE BELIEVE THAT ANZUS ALLIES SHOULD CONTINUE THEIR SUPPORT OF THESE STATES, AND SHOULD DO NOTHING THAT MIGHT BE INTERPRETED BY COMMUNIST STATES AS A LESSENING OF INTEREST OR RESOLVE ON THE PART OF THE ANZUS POWERS, ESPECIALLY DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD AFTER THE FALL OF CAMBODIA AND SOUTH VIET-NAM. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FPDA CONTRIBUTES

TO REGIONAL STABILITY AND THE CONFIDENCE OF AREA STATES, AND THAT THE PRESENCE OF AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND FORCES IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE HAS SYMBOLIC DETERRENT VALUE. WE ENCOURAGE AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND TO MAINTAIN THE DEPLOYMENT OF THESE FORCES AS LONG AS THEY ARE WELCOMED BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT.

6. DEPARTMENT RECOGNIZES DOMESTIC POLITICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING TIZARD'S STATEMENT AND POLICIES OF GOA AND GONZ ON THIS ISSUE. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE IT IMPORTANT TO PUT OUR VIEWS ON RECORD WITH BOTH GOVERNMENTS. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, PRESS CONFERENCES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE114289
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MAGMICAUD:MHS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750172-0492
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750547/aaaabqow.tel
Line Count: 142
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN EA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 WELLINGTON 1262
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FIVE POWER DEFENSE ARRANGEMENTS
TAGS: MARR, AS, NZ, US, FPDA, (TIZARD, ROBERT J)
To: WELLINGTON CANBERRA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006